

REMARKS

This reply is in response to the Office Action dated December 5, 2005. Claims 1-173 are pending in the application. Claims 1-19, 64-72, and 120-157 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner for being drawn to a non-elected invention. Claims 20-39, 41-56, 58, 60-63, 73-91, 93-108, 110, 112-119 and 158-173 stand rejected. Claims 40, 57, 59, 92, 109 and 111, and Figure 12 stand objected to. New claims 174 to 304 are added.

Applicant has amended the claims to place the application in condition for allowance. More particularly, Applicant has cancelled restricted claims 1-19, 64-72, and 120-157 without prejudice, reserving the right to pursue those cancelled claims in a divisional application. Applicant has also amended the claims for reasons discussed below.

Applicant has also added new claims 174-304. Support for the new claims can be found in the original claims 1-157; therefore, no new matter has been added.

Entry of the foregoing amendment and reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Objection to Figure 12

Applicant has enclosed herewith a replacement Figure 12. The replacement Figure 12 corrects the poor print quality of original Figure 12 for reasons noted by the Examiner.

Claim objections

Claims 40, 57, 59, 92, 109 and 111 stand objected to for being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant has canceled allowable claim 57 without prejudice, and amended base claim 20 to include the allowable subject matter in independent form. As such, claim 20 and those dependent therefrom are now in condition for allowance. Allowance of those claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant has also cancelled allowable claim 109 without prejudice, and amended base claim 74 to present the allowable subject matter in independent form. As such, claim 74 and those dependent therefrom are now in condition for allowance. Allowance of those claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant has also presented the subject matter of allowable claim 92 in independent form as new base claim 174. As such, new claim 174 and new claims 175-218 and 269-273 that depend therefrom are in condition for allowance. Applicant has also rewritten allowable claim 59 in independent form as claim 275 and new claims 276-303 depend from claim 275. Thus new claims 275-303 are in condition of allowance. Allowance of those claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant has also presented the subject matter of allowable claim 40 in independent form as new base claim 219. As such, new claim 219 and new claims 220-268 that depend therefrom are in condition for allowance. Allowance of those claims is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicant noticed that two claims numbered as 81 were originally presented. To correct that unintentional numbering error, Applicant has proposed cancelling the second claim 81 and presenting that subject matter as new claim 274. Since claim 274 depends from base claim 74 which is now in condition for allowance, new claim 274 is also in condition for allowance. Allowance of the same is respectfully requested.

Applicant has also rewritten allowable claim 111 in independent form as new base claim 304. As such, new claim 304 is in condition for allowance. Allowance of this claim is respectfully requested.

Moreover, claims 44 and 96 are objected to for lacking a period at the end of the claim. Applicant has amended those claims, obviating the objection. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 60-62 and 112-114 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The Examiner states that "it cannot be determined whether the temperature and pressure conditions specified in the parent claims apply to the first, second, or all reactors." Applicant respectfully disagrees. Those claims, especially when read in light of the specification, are more than clear to one of ordinary skill in the art. As described in the specification, the pressures and temperatures recited in the base claims can be operated in any one or more of the reactors of a multiple reactor system. See, e.g. paragraphs [0037], [0042], [0057] through [0059], and [00164]+. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Applicant has amended base claims 20 and 74 to include the allowable subject matter identified by the Examiner, placing the application in condition for allowance. Therefore, such §§ 102 and 103 rejections are rendered moot. Withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

The secondary references made of record are noted. However, it is believed that the secondary references are no more pertinent to the Applicant's disclosure than the primary references cited in the Office Action. Therefore, Applicant believes that a detailed discussion of the secondary references is not necessary for a full and complete response to this Office Action.

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Applicant invites the Examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney if there are any issues outstanding which have not been addressed to the Examiner's satisfaction. A petition for extension of time for filing this response is attached; however, in the event that petition becomes separated from this Response, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge counsel's Deposit Account No. 05-1712, for any fees, including extension of time fees and excess claim fees, required to make this response timely and acceptable to the Office.

May 5, 2006
Date

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine L. Bell
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 35,444

ExxonMobil Chemical Company
Law Technology
P.O. Box 2149
Baytown, Texas 77522-2149
Phone: 281-834-5982
Fax: 281-834-2495